

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T SANA 0679

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: PFOR, YE
SUBJ: PDRY AT THE CROSSROADS

1. ROSY ROULEAU, FORMER WIFE OF ERIC ROULEAU, LE MONDE CORRESPONDENT AND ARABIST, IS BACK IN YEMEN AS JOURNALIST ON HER OWN. AFTER TEN PREVIOUS TRIPS IN TWICE AS MANY YEARS, SHE HAS EXCELLENT CONTACTS AND UNUSUAL PERSPECTIVE. HER ARABIC LETS HER WORK ONE ON ONE.

2. SHE IS FULL OF STORIES ABOUT SALIM RUBAYYA ALI WHOM SHE SAW AT LENGTH IN ADEN. HE'S NO A THINKER, SHE SAYS, BUT A MAN OF ACTION, A MAN WHO HAS DECIDED FOR HARD PRACTICAL REASONS THAT THE CAUSE OF EXPORTING REVOLUTION ISN'T WORTH THE COST AT HOME. "WE WERE STARVING," SALIM TOLD HER. "WE HAD TO TAKE THE OUTSTRETCHED SAUDI HAND." HE INSISTED THIS WAS A TACTICAL VICTORY, PERHAPS (SHE FELT) AS MUCH OVER HARD-LINERS AT HOME AS OVER THE WEALTHY SAUDIS AND HE TOLD HER FLATELY THAT HE WOULD NOT RPT NOT LET THE NEW POLICY INFLUENCE THE DOMESTIC ACHIEVE-

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MENTS. BUT THE EXPORT OF REVOLUTION WAS NOW MERE TALK, AFTER EIGHT YEARS OF ARMS AND TRAINING, AND NOT REALLY AN ARTICLE OF FAITH ANYMORE.

3. SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO SEE IDEOLOGICAL ABDAL FATTAH ISMAIL BUT HE WAS "IN THE HOSPITAL" AND "VERY SICK. EVERYTHING'S WRONG WITH HIM INCLUDING

SOME KIND OF INTERNAL BLEEDING."

COMMENT:

FOR EIGHTEEN MONTHS THIS POST HAS PRODUED A SERIES
OF CABLES ENTITLED "PDRY AT THE CROSSROADS," WHICH WAS
INTENDED TO LOOK FOR SIGNS OF CHANGE AND VULNERABILITY
IN RADICAL PDRY. THE SIGNS ARE THERE BUT THEY ARE NOT
UNMIXED. WHEN FOR INSTANCE IVOR LUCAS, UK MIDEAST CHIEF,
SAW PDRY FORMIN MUTIH IN NOVEMBER 1976 HE "ASKED HIM
IF HE COULD SAY SPECIFICALLY THAT PDRY HAD NO INTENTION
OF EXPORTING REVOLUTION. (MUTHI) DID SO, WHILE
ADDING THAT OF COURSE CERTAIN REGIMES WERE BOUND TO
HAVE OPPOSITION. "(THE QUOTE IF FROM LUCAS'S REPORT.)
SOE ONE MUST SHOOSE. WE THINK THE BALANCE HAS SWUNG
DECISIVELY ON THE EXPORT OF REVOLUTION ALTHOUGH LINK TO
TERRORISM REMAINS STRONG. MOREOVER, THERE IS A POTENTIAL
FOR MUCH FURTHER CHANGE. LONG CABLE DETAILING THIS AND SUGGESTING
A CHANGE OF US POLICY TO SPEED AND TO EXPLOIT THESE SHIFTS WERE

SENT THIS WEEK. THE CONCLUSION: THE TIME AND
CIRCUMSTANCES NOW JUSTIFY RENEWED RELATIONS WITH PDRY.
WE CAN'T BE SURE RELATIONS WLLL PRODUCE THE RESULTS WE WANT,
BUT IT'S WORTH TRYING.

SCOTES

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